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SPOTLIGHT on School Personnel Services

COUNSELLING AND GUIDANCE BRANCH · Supervisor: T.R. Mott

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EVALUATION OF COUNSELLING SERVICES

One of the vital areas of concern within a school jurisdiction is that services provided should be evaluated from time to time. It was expressed by persons responsible for administering counselling services in the Edmonton Catholic School System, as well as the counsellors themselves, that during the school year of 1970/71 a thorough assessment and evaluation of counselling services be made. A committee comprised of an administrator, two teachers, three counsellors, was organized. The initial task of the committee was to compile a set of counselling objectives which then were subjected to an assessment in terms of the degree to which the objectives were being carried out. Questionnaires were developed and administered to students, teachers, administrators, counsellors and parents. The results of the questionnaire were then tabulated and conclusions set out. Further, recommendations for improvement of services were then developed out of the data presented.

Conclusion

It is evident from the data that from the point of view of administrators and teachers, that counselling is considered an important aspect of education. There is a lack of communication with teachers as to the goals of counselling; however, teachers nonetheless express the desire to refer students to the counsellor for help in solving personal problems. All staff groups indicated that inservice programs designed to promote better understanding of problems of interpersonal relations and learning problems of students, are practically non-existent.

While counsellors seem to have excellent lines of communication with administrators, it is evident that only three-quarters of the teachers indicate that feed-back does get presented to them from the counselling procedures. It should be pointed out that the nature of counselling is such that some of the information exchanged in counselling must remain confidential. This could account for some of the feeling that feedback is presented reluctantly. Only about one-quarter of the teachers voiced this as a problem. Although administrators accept the goals of counselling, a substantial majority indicate that there is not an adequate manner of assessing the efficiency of the counselling services offered within a school.

The nature of facilities (the room, furniture, etc.) seems to be viewed as adequate, but materials of a vocational type need upgrading and expansion. Further, it would be reasonable to conclude that teachers look to counsellors for help in assembling occupational information pertinent to their field. The most notable area of concern is that of communicating the purposes, goals and function of counselling services offered. Students particularly lack knowledge of what they can expect from counselling.

Recommendations

1) COMMUNICATIONS with all three, staff, students and parents should become a prime focus of all counsellors.

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Public Relations

Alberta has witnessed tremendous development and progress in the field of Guidance and Counselling in the past decade. School counsellors are providing excellent services in Elementary, Junior High and Senior High schools throughout the Province. I have been personally impressed in my travels across the Province with the generally high quality of service provided, however the picture is not completely rosy. Our area of interest is surrounded by a degree of uncertainty, role conflict, demands for accountability and the resultant frustration accompanying these uncertainties. We have gone through a period of soul searching to clear up these uncertainties and now it is time to speak up and demonstrate the educational value of our services. I think it fair to say that in the past we haven't really been very successful in communicating the value of our services, in describing the full worth of our contributions and I am convinced that we must do a better job of public relations. We must advertise to our publics (students, parents, professional colleagues) the kinds of services that are offered and provide more opportunities for our publics to meet us and get to know us. We must do a better job of explaining guidance programs and school counsellor functions to teachers and of emphasizing the guidance team approach in our relations with teachers. It seems to me that school counsellors should make every effort to work closely with classroom teachers in terms of becoming involved in the classroom and assisting in the improvement of the learning environment where possible. School counsellors should also make every effort to ensure that teachers receive feed-back of non-confidential information regarding certain counsellor contacts in the spirit of contributing to a more optimal learning situation for students.

The school counsellor should also become more involved in research. This is not to imply that the counsellor should spend an undue portion of time in a sophisticated analysis kind of research, but to say that the counsellor needs to increase efforts in being accountable and responsible for what he is doing in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. The counsellor must continue to gather visible results (objective data) compatable with counselling goals. Granted many counselling activities do not lend themselves to assessment, however I believe that the school counsellor must be professionally committed to the risk involved in the accountibility of his total practice. Surely we must be flexible and open to change and be motivated to examine existing practices and justify our own individual on-the-job performance.

In fact, I would suggest that the continued development and growth of counselling and guidance services in this province is largely dependent upon public reaction to the quality, need and demonstrated value of these services. I am very optimistic that we will do well in our efforts. Is not the goal of education to meet the needs of the whole child within his environment? Is it not to discover his talents and limitations in order that he may become all he is capable of becoming? Are these not consistent with primary counsellor objectives?

TRM

Dr. Larry Ferguson, former Supervisor of this Branch, is now the assistant to Dr. T.C. Byrne, the first President of the University of Athabasca.

During Larry's incumbency as Supervisor, he demonstrated a great deal of zeal and enthusiasm and gave of his many talents in generous measure. This vigour and enthusiasm will continue to be a distinctive feature of Larry and his many friends wish him well in the challenge of his new responsibilities.

2) About one teacher in three requested in-service programs concerned with behavior and educational problems of students.

3) About one out of every two teachers indicated additional counselling time is needed.

4) The degree of misunderstanding between other staff members and counsellors would be minimized if a clear set of goals were available for presentation. It would be useful to present these goals at a staff meeting early in the school year for discussion and clarification.

5) In order to maintain quality of service, evaluation of counselling services within each school should be carried out.

6) Greater emphasis needs to be given to acquaint all new students to facilities, programs and extra-curricular activities within a school.

7) It is incumbent upon the counsellors to acquaint themselves with dynamics and procedures that contribute to effective work with groups - large and small. Group activities should be part of the daily repertoire of counsellors and further, they should be willing to disseminate information that would contribute to effective group work to other staff members.

More detailed information may be obtained by writing David B. MacDougall, Assistant Director, Pupil Personnel Services, Edmonton Catholic School System.

PERCEPTIONS OF THE HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELLOR ROLE IN ALBERTA

This study conducted by the Counselling and Guidance Branch, was designed to investigate if differences in perceptions of the role of the high school counsellor existed between groups and among members of each group of secondary school counsellors, teachers and principals in Alberta schools.

To obtain the necessary information, a fifty item questionnaire was mailed to school counsellors, teachers and principals from ninety-three secondary schools in Alberta. Eighteen schools located in the city of Edmonton, fifteen schools in the city of Calgary, eleven schools in smaller cities and forty-eight schools from other communities in Alberta made up the sample.

Total scores for each respondent in the study on the dimensions of Acceptance, Implementation and Importance were computed. The t test was used to determine the significance of differences among group mean scores for counsellor, teacher and principal groups and between mean scores for urban and rural groups of counsellors, teachers and principals.

The results of the study revealed that counsellor, teacher and principal groups agreed on the role functions of the secondary school counsellor, however, significant differences were found to exist between the teacher group and counsellor group and between the teacher group and principal group on the Implementation dimension. Significant differences were also found between the counsellor and teacher groups and between the counsellor and principal groups on the Importance dimension. There were no significant relationships found between rural and urban counsellor, teacher or principal groups on any of the three dimensions under investigation.

The school counsellor's locus of primary responsibility is with the individual student, however his relationships with and responsibilities to his teacher and administration colleagues are very important. A good deal of evidence from the findings of this study disclose teachers to differ significantly from counsellors and principals in their perceptions of the extent of implementation of counsellor functions in their schools. One possible

explanation for this finding is that teachers may need more information to clearly understand the counsellor's job in the school. It is quite possible that some aspects of the counsellor's job may appear to teachers to be somewhat mysterious and unknown. This situation could lead directly into many inaccurate and uninformed perceptions of counsellor role and its implementation in the school.

The results of this study suggest that school counsellors could profitably re-examine and assess their present strategies for implementing many counsellor functions in their schools, particularly in the matter of communicating and working with their teacher colleagues.

The fact that counsellors, teachers and principals have similar expectations of the school counsellor role is a major finding of this study.

More detailed information may be obtained by writing to the Supervisor of Counselling and Guidance, Department of Education.

SHARE-IN: THE 3 C'S

The Edmonton Regional Guidance Council held a conference in November dealing with Counselling, Co-ordinating and Consulting: the three roles of the counsellor of the '70's. Some 75 practicing school counsellors shared their experiences with their colleagues through presentations, workshops, and informal discussions. The conference was a resounding success as evidenced by this group of school counsellors' commitment to professional growth.

W. P. Ostashewski, Past President
Edmonton Regional Guidance Council

LEARNING DISABILITIES WORKSHOP - COUNTY OF PARKLAND NO. 31

A number of Institutes on Learning Disabilities of School Age Children have been held throughout the province. More are planned in the next few months. A workshop on Learning Disabilities was held in January at Spruce Grove in conjunction with an Inservice Institute for teachers.

Speakers, Mrs. Doris Worden, an Edmonton Public School Board Remedial Reading Specialist and Mrs. Beth Blowers, Sessional Instructor, University of Alberta, Edmonton, gave presentations on remedial approaches and materials available to teachers of students with Learning Disorders.

Mrs. Worden's presentation dealt with the various kinds of readers and the methods by which they learn such as the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic-tactile approaches. Information on symptons and diagnosis teachers make in their approaches of students were discussed together with the various materials and reading programs available for learning handicapped students.

Mrs. Blower's presentation included the types of remedial materials that are available for assisting the learning disabled in overcoming specific learning handicaps. Methods or approaches to take in the remediation of learning handicaps were discussed such as follow-up exercises to testing. Both speakers had materials on display for teachers to examine.

The Institute closed with an address by the Honorable Lou Hyndman, Minister of Education.

N. W. McDowell, Director
Counselling and Special Education

NEWS FROM:

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Counsellor Leadership Seminar

This year again, a two week special seminar is being organized for pupil personnel workers and counsellors. This seminar will be held from July 10 to 21 at the Alberta School for the Deaf. The program will to some extent be coordinated with that of the Leadership Course for School Principals which will be held at the same time. It is hoped that the resulting interaction between counsellors and school principals will prove to be beneficial to the school systems.

The policy board for the seminar includes the Alberta School Trustees Association, Alberta Teachers' Association, Department of Education, Guidance Council of Alberta, and the University of Alberta. The course will carry no official credit and there will be no examinations.

A topical outline for the course has been developed in conjunction with counsellor practitioners and will focus on the changing role of the counsellor in the school. Particular emphasis will be given to the counsellor's responsibilities with respect to the community and to the instructional staff, in addition to his established role with individual pupils. On each major topic, presentations by informed speakers will be followed by group discussions.

Participants will be sponsored by their school boards and the number will be restricted to approximately 70.

Additional information can be obtained by writing to Dr. H.W. Zingle, Director, Counsellor Leadership Seminar, Department of Educational Psychology, Faculty of Education, the University of Alberta, Edmonton.

Counselling Practicum

This year for the first time, Ed Psych 512 (Counselling Practicum), will be offered during the Summer Session. As it has been necessary to set a maximum on the number of people who will be permitted to register in the course it is important to register early.

Some of the factors which will be considered in admitting students will be:

(1) Distance from Edmonton. As this course is offered occasionally in the Evening Credit Program, and as it is fairly easy for Edmonton residents to take the course in the Evening Credit Program, students from more distant points will be given higher priority.

(2) Completion of prerequisites. Individuals who are further along on their Graduate Diploma program will be given higher priority than those individuals for whom this will be a first course. Specifically, students who have completed Ed Psych 515 and Ed Psych 521 will be given higher priority.

(3) Students who are already on a diploma program will be given higher priority than special students.

(4) Students who are already in counselling positions will be given higher priority than students who are considering counselling as a career for the first time.

(5) Date on which the application for admission is received.

Anyone interested in taking this course should write to Dr. H.W. Zingle, Director, Counsellor Education Program, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, Edmonton and request an Application for Admission to Ed Psych 512 form. Only after the student's admission has been approved by the admissions committee and the student has received a permission letter from Dr. Zingle will registration forms be processed by the University Registrar.

Students will be permitted to register in only this one course as this will be a full time commitment. A sizeable amount of pre-session work will be assigned.

Vocational Guidance Bursary

The Department of Industrial and Vocational Education of the University of Alberta in cooperation with the Department of Educational Psychology, offers a Graduate Diploma program in Vocational Guidance.

For further information contact Dr. J.E. Gallagher, Associate Professor of Industrial and Vocational Education, University of Alberta, Edmonton.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

The Department of Educational Psychology will be offering EDPS 670, Practicum in Counseling during the summer session, 1972. Persons interested in taking this course should consult the University of Calgary Summer Session Calendar.

Enrolment will be limited to 12 students.

Prerequisites - a basic theories course in counseling, a teaching certificate and teaching experience, a counselling position during the 1972-73 school year and approval of the instructor.

Further information may be obtained by writing to Dr. R.C. Conklin, Dept. of Educational Psychology, University of Calgary, Calgary.

COLLEGE COMMISSION APPOINTMENT

In an effort to keep the public informed of developments within the Alberta public college system, the province's Colleges Commission has appointed Glen E. Yost as its Information Officer.

"We are obviously concerned with keeping the public aware of the Colleges Commission and its developments," said Mr. Yost, "but it is also our desire to keep people informed of the opportunities in attending one of the six public colleges in Alberta. It is important for us to stress the flexibility of the community colleges in providing adult and continuing education, upgrading, vocational career and general education programs in addition to university-transfer programs."

The success of the colleges under the two-year old Colleges Act seems almost certain judging from recent figures provided by the Commission's Planning Branch. They foresee a potential enrolment increase to 19,900 students by 1977-78. Though down slightly from projections, total college enrolment in the fall of 1971 in Alberta was well above figures from the previous year.

The Commission's Information Officer has prepared a booklet of benefit to prospective students. The publication, outlining the advantages of attending a community college in Alberta, has had wide distribution. Anyone wishing a copy or copies may contact Mr. Yost at 600 Devonian Building, 11160 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta.

FOCUS ON

SCHOOL COUNSELLING SERVICES - COUNTY OF STRATHCONA

At the present time there are fourteen counsellors in over twenty schools serving the guidance needs of around 9,000 pupils.

Mr. L. A. Walker, Superintendent of the Clover Bar School Division secured school board sanction to appoint a teacher for part-time guidance work on the staff of Salisbury Junior-Senior High School. I accepted the appointment and commenced duties in September, 1958. Dr. Roland Lambert, principal and the late Mr. C. T. DeTro, vice-principal, gave me considerable assistance in developing a guidance program. A good portion of my time was spent teaching, but as the demands of the counselling services grew, my teaching load was reduced considerably.

The Supervisor of Guidance for the Department of Education, Mr. A. Aldridge was working tirelessly all over Alberta at this time laying the foundation for counselling services in schools. From the start, he gave full support to the service that I had undertaken in 1958. In the same year Mr. Grant Jensen was appointed part-time guidance teacher at Fort Saskatchewan High.

In 1963 I was appointed Assistant to the Superintendent. One of my duties was to give supervision and direction to the guidance services in the three high schools. I continued to hold regular meetings with the three high school counsellors. Close liaison with the high school principals and the superintendent made the task of providing some leadership a pleasant one. The work being done by the counsellors was perceived as valuable and necessary so that expansion of services into the elementary schools was a logical next step.

In 1967 Mr. Bert Frey, former guidance counsellor at Fort Saskatchewan High commenced his duties as school psychologist. His excellent background and experience as both teacher and counsellor fitted him well for handling the growing case load of exceptional children or special cases. He has worked closely with Mr. Jardine, the counselling staff and myself and has ideally offered a service that is "complementary" to the counselling service.

The total counselling staff now consists of the following personnel:

1) ELEMENTARY SCHOOL-four full time and three part-time (Mr. M. Marianicz, Mr. R. Davies, Mr. W. H. Baker, Mr. L. Peters, Mr. J. Seutter, Mrs. G. Rabenstein, Mr. D. Smith).

2) JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL-two full time and one part-time (Mr. L. Cribb, Mr. R. Stacey, Mr. E. Leeck).

3) SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL-four full time (Mr. J. Skakun, Mrs. E. Lazoruk, Mr. B. Blair, Mr. R. Wadson).

Mr. Wm. H. Baker has recently been appointed to the position of Director of Special Educational Services. He will take up his new duties soon which will likely include the major areas of guidance director, testing and special education.

For me, it has been a great privilege and a challenge to work with the guidance personnel of our county and to have had a small part in helping our county school authorities develop counselling services to their present level. It now remains for all counselling personnel to work in close cooperation with the teachers and principals to build good relationships at every level. In this way the service can achieve and maintain "relevance" at a time when every one in education is thinking in terms of "accountability"!

I. B. Mallet, Assistant Superintendent
County of Strathcona

Materials Available From The Branch

The following materials and publications are available on request:

- Occupational Trends and Employment Opportunities
- Employment Opportunities Handbook Canada 1971/72
- Canadian Occupational Briefs (a brief is available for each of some 65 different occupations)
- Prerequisites to Post-Secondary Education 1971/72
- Physical Facilities in Guidance
- Community College Career Outlook 1971/72
- University Career Outlook 1971/72
- Cumulative Guidance Record Folder (with accompanying Handbook)

The following Counselling Films can be obtained by directing your requests to Miss Kay Kutt, Audio Visual Services Branch, Room 200, Devonian Building, 11160 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta:

The School Counsellor #PR 1032
- 16 mm, 28 minutes - examines and explains the role of the guidance counsellor.

Counselling In The Elementary School #PR 1033
- 16 mm, 27 minutes - deals with two counsellors and the problems they encounter in a low-income area elementary school.

Counselling In The Secondary School #PR 1034
- 16 mm, 20 minutes - concentrates on one counsellor in an affluent school district dealing with typical concerns of individual high school students.

Group Counselling #PR 1035
- 16 mm, 26 minutes - records the drama and tension of one group session.

Career Fairs

The Branch has organized the 1972 series of Career Fairs in cooperation with Business, Industry, Government Departments, and Post Secondary Educational Agencies across the Province. These fairs will be held at:

Lethbridge Collegiate Institute - LETHBRIDGE	Feb. 8 & 9
Brooks Composite H.S. - BROOKS	Feb. 10
Ponoka Senior H.S. - PONOKA	Feb. 16
Camrose Composite H.S. - CAMROSE	Feb. 17
Vegreville Composite H.S. - VEGREVILLE	March 1
Bonnyville Centralized H.S. - BONNYVILLE	March 2
Memorial Composite H.S. - STONY PLAIN	March 7
Harry Collinge H.S. - HINTON	March 9
Drumheller Composite H.S. - DRUMHELLER	March 13
Olds Senior H.S. - OLDS	March 14
Peace River H.S. - PEACE RIVER	March 21
Edwin Parr Composite H.S. - ATHABASCA	March 23

A.P.G.A. 1972 Convention

March 26 - 29 CHICAGO

THEME: "Involved For Human Development"

Send application, fee, and housing requests to: A.P.G.A. 1972 Convention, 1607 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C. 20009.

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